

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED JUN 6

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC  
Ridgely's Delight Historic District  
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *Roughly S. Fremont Ave.,* Russell Streets  
Bounded by West Pratt, South Fremont, Conway and  
CITY, TOWN Baltimore CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Third  
STATE Maryland VICINITY OF CODE COUNTY CODE  
024 Baltimore City 510  
*(independent city)*

3 CLASSIFICATION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Various Private Owners and See Continuation Sheet #9.  
Norman F. Finnance

STREET & NUMBER  
621 Washington Boulevard  
CITY, TOWN Baltimore VICINITY OF STATE  
Maryland 21230

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore City Courthouse: Real Estate Department  
STREET & NUMBER Calvert and Fayette Streets Maryland  
CITY, TOWN Baltimore, STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ridgely's Delight Historic District is a wedge-shaped area roughly bound by Fremont Avenue on the west, Conway Street on the south, Russell and Green Streets on the east and Pratt Street on the north. The specific district boundaries have been drawn to exclude the modern power station on the northeast corner, which occupies the entire block bounded by Pratt Street on the north, Emory Street on the west, Portland Street on the south and Green Street on the east.

The historic district represents a surviving fragment of a larger neighborhood which has been constricted by modern development. The construction of Russell Street in the 1930's eradicated a broad swath on the eastern side of the neighborhood. Recent demolition of entire blocks on both sides of Fremont Avenue and the south side of Conway Street (in anticipation of the proposed City Boulevard) has artificially separated Ridgely's Delight from similar types of neighborhoods to the west. The expansion of the University of Maryland complex has extended to the north side of Pratt Street and forms a distinct boundary there.

However, within these artificially created boundaries exists a cohesive neighborhood, which by virtue of the "human" scale of its buildings and the irregular streets with their self-contained, intimate vistas, still possesses its original 19th century character.

To call the scale of Ridgely's Delight "human" implies an intimacy between structures and people and a consistency in the elements of the streetscape. The strength of the human scale is the primary asset of Ridgely's Delight and most readily distinguishes the neighborhood from its environs. There are no buildings in the district that are truly overwhelming. Both residential and commercial properties co-exist in harmony.

The major threat to scale is the heavy traffic which regularly uses Russell Street and Fremont Avenue. Similarly, traffic on Washington Boulevard is disruptive at times.

The street pattern is an essential ingredient of the visual character of the district. Only the northernmost blocks follow strictly the North-South grid used in the bulk of the City. Washington Boulevard, which predates the district, runs southwest from the northeast corner of the district, and determines the remainder of the plat. Streets and alleys which join the boulevard are generally perpendicular to it. South Fremont similarly predates most development, and with Washington Boulevard is responsible for the shapes of the several triangular blocks in the midsection of the district. The visual result is a number of closed vistas along streets and alleys contributing significantly to the scale of the area. This design also provides the block interiors with picturesque spaces rarely

See continuation sheet #7.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ridgely's Delight Historic District represents a substantial and well preserved fragment of the large neighborhoods which developed during Baltimore's first period of expansion in the early 19th century. It is furthermore exemplary of the manner in which Baltimore neighborhoods have risen and developed, both socially and architecturally, and covers a span of time equal to any within the city's history of expansion beyond its original incorporated boundaries. The District's residential structures range from the two or two and a half story late Federal houses representing the first phase of row house development in Baltimore, to the more substantial three-story corniced Italianate versions built for the middle and upper classes toward the end of the 19th century. Frequently the latter type represents a modernization of the former. With few exceptions the street pattern adheres to that surveyed and recorded by Thomas Poppleton in his plan of 1823. The majority of the development occurred between 1830 and 1870, following a rather cohesive pattern that reflects Ridgely's Delight conception as an urban neighborhood and which was fueled by the bordering industrial development as well as the establishment of the University of Maryland medical facilities.

During its heyday in the latter half of the 19th century, Ridgely's Delight was a prosperous middle class neighborhood; however, within recent decades the area has undergone gradual deterioration. It has become a low-rent, lower class neighborhood and its buildings have suffered from lack of maintenance as well as abandonment. Through this decay and modern development on the fringes, the larger original neighborhood has been greatly constricted. However, within the remaining area, the historic fabric has been protected from modernization, the street pattern left intact, and neighborhood integrity maintained making this isolated neighborhood an even greater phenomenon in light of its surroundings.

Today a rebirth for this historic neighborhood in Southwest Baltimore seems to be dawning. A rising number of houses are being rehabilitated as middle class housing, and selected properties are being developed through the City's Urban Homesteading Program.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet #14.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 24 acres

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	359610	4340580	B	18	3599610	4349410
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	18	359960	4349890	D	18	359810	4349100
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Pratt Street and South Fremont Avenue, proceed easterly along the south curb of West Pratt St. to its intersection with the west curb of Emory St.; thence southerly along the west curb of Emory St., following its line to its intersection with the south curb of Portland St.; thence easterly along said curb of Portland St. to its intersection with the west curb of

See Continuation Sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard Greenwood, John Hnedak, Janet Kennelly, Steven Levy

ORGANIZATION Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

Interstate Division for Baltimore City/

September 3, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

2225 N. Charles Street

396-6133

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Baltimore,

Maryland 21218

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*J. Mitchell*

2-6-80

TITLE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Luce*

DATE

6/6/80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*Emme Jane Saxe*

DATE

6-3-80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Regional Coordinator*

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Ridgely's Delight Historic District  
Baltimore City  
Maryland

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## PROPERTY OWNERS LIST

Harry W. Lerner 3016 Fallstaff Road Apt. D. Baltimore, Maryland 21209	H. Square, Inc. 600 Rockford Road Silver Spring, Maryland 20902	William Trenner 1212 Mt. Royal Avenue Baltimore, Maryland 21217
Alvin D. Alsenberg 1001 Hollins Street Baltimore, Maryland 21223	Sandra McDevitt 405 Harwood Road Baltimore, Maryland 21228	Jean Ferguson 355 N. Calvert Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Rudolph C. Turner 1436 Bronco Road Boulder City, NV 89005	Iorence Stebbings 654 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	George W. Kane 625 Portland Street Baltimore, Maryland
Abraham Lockett 3810 Barrington Road Baltimore, Maryland 21215	Napoleon Alexander 1114 Sterrett Street Baltimore, Maryland	Levi Barnes 2736 Lauretta Avenue Baltimore, Maryland 21223
Allen J. Dove 614 Warner Street Baltimore, Maryland	Robert Hayden 771 W. Cross Street Baltimore, Maryland	C. Edward Hoerichs 1815 Frederick Road Baltimore, Maryland 21223
Anthony J. Jordan 616 Warner Street Baltimore, Maryland	Mace Cohen 212 W. Greene Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201	Linda Moore 643 Portland Street Baltimore, Maryland
Renaissance Properties, Inc. c/o Peter G. Wyman 349 North Calvert Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202	Marie Ermine 666 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	Melvin Fine 2200 Wilkens Ave. Baltimore, Maryland 21223
Melvin L. Knight 655 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	Brian T. Dale 668 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	Leo M. Karpeles 647 Portland Street Baltimore, Maryland
Charles P. Moran, Jr. 470 Willard Avenue Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015	Linton V. Stanson 674 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	Milton Kaplan 424 Equitable Building Baltimore, Maryland 21202
N.B.S. 1003 Smoke Tree Road Baltimore, Maryland 21208	Christine W. Roberts 676 Washington Boulevard Baltimore, Maryland	Eyelyn Reiness 209-11 S. Fremont Ave. Baltimore, Maryland 21230
		Charles Kuning 707 Dover Street Baltimore, Maryland

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

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PROPERTY OWNERS LIST (continued)

Sallie Kravetz  
709 Dover Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Vytautas Makauskas  
737 W. Pratt Street  
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William Johnson  
211 Penn Street  
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Russell McCloud  
711 Dover Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Samuel Latham  
633 Dover Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Mildred A. Nesbitt  
213 Penn Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Dover St. Properties  
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Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Elmer Battle  
651 Dover Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Gordon Stiek  
236 Dolphin Lane  
Baltimore, Maryland 21217

Albert Williams  
718 Portland Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Goldie Lawrence  
655 Dover Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

Levi Barnes  
633 Portland Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

C. E. Stevenson  
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Baltimore, Maryland

Robert Max  
8202 Pumpkin Seed Ct.  
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Baltimore, Maryland 21230

United Decorative Flower  
Co., Inc.  
701 W. Pratt Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

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P. O. Box 1801  
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John Grimmer  
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Moore-Matthews Co.  
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Phoenix, Maryland 21131

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Baltimore, Maryland 21209

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Ridgely's Delight Historic District  
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PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.  
100 E. North Avenue  
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Mabel H. Beverly  
419 W. 28th Street  
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Ethel Adams  
205 Penn Street  
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Gross Enterprise  
647 W. Pratt  
Baltimore, Maryland

Ramax Realty Co., Inc.  
844 Park Avenue  
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Snyder Equipment Company  
655 W. Pratt Street  
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ZLW, Inc.  
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Maryland

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PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

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Baltimore City

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PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

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Gene H. Perdue  
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Dimensional Productions  
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PROPERTY OWNERS (continued)

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Baltimore, Maryland

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Baltimore, Maryland

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Baltimore, Maryland

The Honorable William Donald Schaefer  
Mayor and City Council  
City Hall  
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Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Frank D. Dibattista  
651 Washington Boulevard  
Baltimore, Maryland

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209 S. Fremont Avenue  
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Baltimore, Maryland

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227 S. Fremont Avenue  
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Baltimore, Maryland 21230

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Baltimore, Maryland

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equalled in the standard grid blocks. The intersection of Penn Street and Melvin Drive is a prime example of this; its southeast corner has recently been made into an interior park. The "Y" of alleys in the block west of Emory Street is a similar feature, but in poor condition. There are some local plans to close one of its legs for a vest-pocket park.

A landscape feature which belongs to the street pattern proper is the "walking alley" which runs between (and parallel to) Portland Street and Melvin Drive from Emory to Penn. The alley provides a quiet linear green space with views into the backyards of small houses on either side; again reinforcing human scale and unusual for Baltimore.

A final outstanding feature of this urban landscape is the large number of set-back houses with ample front yards. In some cases these houses predate the intensive development of the area, and are explicable in that way; in other cases they are explained by whim. In all cases they are a welcome relief from the severity of strict at-easement facades, and their random location provides a variety and texture lacking where one extreme is the rule.

Typically, a building in Ridgely's Delight is a brick row-house<sup>1</sup>, one family residence of two or three bays, and two, two and one half or three stories, built at the property line. The roof is either flat with cornice or gabled with one dormer. Sally-ports at sidewalk level or below are common, generally placed between two houses.

The typical houses of Ridgely's Delight may be described in two ways, by size and relative elegance, or by period and style. In general, the earlier houses are the smaller, and were occupied by a less affluent class of people than the larger and later houses. In many cases, the latter were modified to conform in size and style to the former. This is most recognizable when a three-story house with contiguous smaller houses shares sill and lintel lines.

The first houses to be built were the two-bay, two-story late Federal houses. Their proportions were nearly square for facades and fenestration, windows 6/6. The roof was gabled with fairly steep pitch

1

#645 Melvin Drive is a frame building on a brick basement, at the end of a row which was once entirely frame (1879) and is now brick.

See continuation sheet #8.

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while the ridge was parallel to the street, with a single central dormer. Where details occur, as on the gable of the dormer, they are either late Federal or early Greek Revival. Entrances were normally at the side of the house opposite the chimney side, alternating with neighboring buildings, so that the street had a rhythm of paired doors alternating with coupled chimneys. The very earliest of these were built with entrances at street level (713 Pratt). Of those that remain, the rule is a first floor above a small basement (524-532 Paca). Occasional three-bay facades occur (604 Washington Boulevard). Common bond is the rule.

The next phase of the development is a continuous and gradual transition from the houses described above, to the elaborate Italianate rowhouses of the 1860's and 70's. The Federal townhouse first had the slope of its gable lessened (633-645 Melvin). The height of the facade increased to two and one half stories,<sup>2</sup> and the proportions of fenestration changed accordingly (626-632 Paca), i.e., they became taller. Often first story openings were round arched. The half story windows began as very low, flat, rectangles, and gradually increased to nearly square, but still distinguishable as only half a story (624 Paca). Shortly after the addition of this story, the dormers began to disappear and by the time the third story arrived, were gone completely (649-653 Washington Boulevard). From this point the jump to the Italianate house was rapid. The gable roof is replaced by a corniced flat roof. The first cornices were reticently designed (932 S. Paca), usually no more than two or three courses of brick headers laid with alternating depressions or in courses of increasing offset from the plane of the facade. Wooden bracketed cornices and metal cornices of true Greek detail were the next phase (607 Paca, 637-39 Paca). In the wooden versions, jigsaw cutouts in the barges between the brackets (for ventilating the roof spaces) became popular during the 1870's (615 Washington Boulevard). Three-bay houses became more common than two-bay houses. The fenestration of these later houses was always of very tall proportions, and generally 2/2, but the details varied widely. Brick or metal eyebrows or hoods became popular over segmental arched windows and doors and the actual windows proportions sometimes became radically attenuated (674 S. Paca). Stained glass appeared in transom-lights over doors and windows (although little is left in Ridgeley's Delight, e.g. 663 Portland).

Brickwork remained common bond, although the bricks themselves became flatter. In a few rare and late houses, elaborate variations of brickwork were found (e.g., 601 S. Paca). The Italianate houses stand on the

2

604, 608, (probably 610 [formstone]) 620 and 622 Washington Boulevard are two-story, two-bay gable and dormer (604 is three-bay) with Flemish bond faces.

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major streets. Minor streets and alleys contain mostly the smaller Federal houses.

This is a district of row-buildings. There are no free-standing structures (except for the gas station). Some of the set back houses have one side wall free. A nearly universal feature of all types of row-houses is 'back buildings'. In the earliest cases they were once free-standing summer kitchens and utility buildings which became connected to the houses by subsequent intervening structures (643 Washington Boulevard). Later in the 19th Century they were built contiguous to the house proper. Narrower than the house itself, they often had promenade porches on one side, usually facing that of a neighbor (626 and 628 Washington Boulevard).

There are several structures in Ridgely's Delight which do not fall into the categories of typical houses. These include the larger light-industrial structures in the northwest corner along Pratt Street where style and materials harmonize with the neighborhood and which furthermore act as a buffer to heavy traffic.

Several other structures also differ from the norm or are of particular interest; they include:

337-339 South Fremont Avenue is a remarkable late Victorian brick adaptation of an Italian Palazzo for commercial use. The brickwork and detail are extremely fine; the facade composition is of a quality rarely exceeded in west Baltimore, sophisticated and in scale with the neighborhood. The second and third floors were used as the ever popular and ambiguous "halls," the first floor commercial or light industry.

401 South Fremont is an evolutionary end point of Victorian commercial architecture. Continuous horizontal banding of several individual brick courses give a 'moderne' look to the segmental arch windows, overhanging bay window and metal cornice that are Victorian holdovers in an Edwardian building.

612, 614 and 616 Washington Boulevard are one building which continues north through the block to Portland Street and has been industrial/commercial since the late 1870's. The Washington Boulevard facade appears to have been originally three separate houses and has a cast iron shop front across the entire first story.

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684 Washington Boulevard was once a set-back three-story structure (the only one on the north side of the block) to which a tiny temple front bank was added at the easement line in the 1930's, a doric one-story structure with wings and a pediment with outside acroteria.

600 Washington Boulevard (circa 1910) makes the most strident appeal to high style in the area. The Georgian Revival commercial building has such details as dressed stone quoins, carved cartouches in the arches of the first floor windows, and a roof with pedimented wall dormers which are unique to the area. The irregular plan, which is a response to the wedge-shaped corner lot, is perfectly consistent with the continuous fabric of the neighborhood. The flair of the design serves as an appropriate entrance to the neighborhood.

655 West Pratt Street is notable for its true mansard roof with dormer, the only one in Ridgely's Delight. The Second Empire style was never popular in Baltimore; hence, such a structure is a rarity. The building, dating from the 1870's is a three-bay, three-story house with brick segmental arch eyebrow windows, now converted to commercial use.

641 Washington Boulevard is a four-story commercial building which fills its entire lot. The property is of conventional residential width and over one hundred feet long. The early 20th century commercial style building is remarkable for its size and proportions.

635, 637, 639, 641, 643, and 645 Washington Boulevard and 609, 611 and 634 Paca Street are notable as set-back houses with postage stamp front yards.

Behind 635 Washington Boulevard is a series of garages built before 1925 by Dr. Merriam, which are reputed to have been the first speculative rental garages in Baltimore.

There is only one genuine intrusion in Ridgely's Delight, the gas station at the southeast corner of Russell Street and Washington Boulevard, occupying 1/2 acre or 2% of the district. It stands on the site of an extremely fine Federal house.

The homesteading activity in Ridgely's Delight began in 1974, and to this date, May 25, 1978, 28 houses have been awarded. Baltimore City is in the process of acquiring 41 additional houses for homesteading here.

Restoration is also being accomplished by several major private developers; their properties total more than 150. Private individual restoration is rapidly increasing.

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The Ridgely's Delight neighborhood is the namesake of one of the early agricultural estates, that of Charles Ridgely, which occupied the open land outside of the City's original boundaries. As one of the earliest graphic records of Baltimore shows,<sup>1</sup> at the turn of the 19th century the southwest portion of land consisted primarily of the estates of Ridgely and Judge McHenry, among others, as well as a collection of smaller houses located on the established roads. The rectangular street grid of Baltimore proper had been established as far west as Green Street, and beyond this the major thoroughfares were Cove Street (later Fremont Avenue), which ran from the open country in the northwest southeasterly to the Patapsco River, and Alexandria or Columbia Pike (Washington Boulevard) which ran westerly and served as the main artery to Washington.

The Thomas Poppleton survey which was coordinated with the plan to expand Baltimore's boundaries, was made in 1816 and published in 1823. In his survey, he continued the street grid beyond Green Street. However, the new streets and lots were aligned with the existing cove and Columbia roads rather than following the regular street patterns to the east. The streets as delineated on the 1823 map form the basic pattern found today. While in 1823 the area was primarily open land, at least two houses on Poppleton's map remain extant (637 Washington Boulevard and 713 West Pratt Street).

A large portion of the development of Ridgely's Delight occurred between 1816 and 1875 with particular intensity during the 1840's and 50's. There was sufficient population by 1842 to warrant the construction of the Columbia Avenue Methodist Church (655 Washington Boulevard). The 1869 Sachse illustration of Baltimore shows development to have been complete and closely resembles the neighborhood as it exists today.

This mid-century development can be largely attributed to the establishment of the University of Maryland medical facilities (slightly to the north) in 1812 and its subsequent expansion and to the appearance of heavy industry and its consequent creation of numerous jobs. Such industries included the B & O Railroad Yards (1830), Winans Locomotive Works (circa 1840), and the Hayward and Bartlett Company (1851), all located on Pratt Street to the west of Fremont Avenue.

Parallel to this development a small industrial quarter appeared in the northwest portion of Ridgely's Delight beginning with an early 19th century iron foundry at Portland and Fremont Streets and expanding into an area with a wide range of productions including a flour mill, a paint and oil factory and a silver beating manufactory. Within the neighbor-

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hood were several craftsmen who supported these industries, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, and other metal workers. Other artisans and small merchants such as cobblers, coal and wood dealers, slaughterers, grocers, bakers and hostlers had their residences and shops throughout the area. A number of first floor storefronts appear in the western end of Washington Boulevard. Other light industry was scattered throughout the area.

Ridgely's Delight stabilized during the later 19th century. Paca Street, Washington Boulevard and portions of Fremont Avenue became the sites of larger middle class homes; three-bay, three-story houses with flat roofs and elaborate cornices which were often expansions and elaborations of the earlier and more modest gable-roofed houses. Simultaneously back streets and block interiors were filled with more modest housing for craftsmen and service persons, often alongside light industry.

The street pattern was changed slightly by the continuation of Penn Street south of Melvin Drive. Later during the Roosevelt Administration, Greene Street was extended south of Portland to become the northern extension of Russell Street, connecting downtown Baltimore with the new Baltimore Washington Parkway. This development relieved Washington Boulevard of Washington bound traffic, and at the same time eradicated a large section of the neighborhood, thus creating its definite eastern edge. The neighborhood began to deteriorate from this point, and was further isolated by demolition along Fremont and Conway in anticipation of another highway project.

In 1974 Ridgely's Delight was designated a homestead district, differing from other homestead districts in Baltimore in that properties available for the program are scattered throughout an occupied area, rather than being an entire vacant quarter. The program has been successful, and shows every sign of continuing so. There has been private restoration and even speculative restoration on a large scale.

The architecture of Ridgely's Delight is unified in two ways, stylistically and physically. The physical relationship consists in the fact that it is almost entirely contiguous and intact. There are no free-standing buildings in Ridgely's Delight, (although occasionally a house will have one freestanding wall), and it is significant that except for those houses which predated the Poppleton Plan, even the earliest structures seem to have been designed with that intent in mind, i.e., all houses were meant to be part of a row, whether they were built simultaneously with contiguous neighbors or not. Clearly, Ridgely's Delight

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was conceived as an urban neighborhood, and its development is one of intensification of the patterns established at its outset, yielding only slightly to increases in wealth and stylistic trends.

The stylistic relationships of the area are unified by a fifty year time span, centered roughly in 1845, which defines the period of most intensive development. As in the rest of Baltimore, styles in Ridgely's Delight tend to reflect later dates than in the rest of the major eastern cities, owing to the reluctance of Baltimore builders to relinquish a style to which they had become accustomed. This conservatism provides Ridgely's Delight with a sequence of Late Federal rowhouses which date from the early 1830's into the 1850's. The characteristics of this span are distinct at both ends: the earliest are two-bay, two-story houses with steep gable roofs and central dormers; the latest are two or three bays wide, on basements, two and one half stories in height, with shallow gable roofs and central dormers.

By the time that this latter development had arrived, the second phase of house had already begun to spring up, a three-story, two-bay house with a flat roof. As the century progressed, these houses became larger and more elaborate, by the 1870's becoming full blown Italiante houses with intricate cornices. In some cases it can be demonstrated that an Italiante house is an enlargement and 'modernization' of a Federal house (637 Melvin Drive).

Having evolved as an urban neighborhood from its conception, Ridgely's Delight is both a highly unified yet diverse collection of mid-19th century structures sandwiched between industry and other intrusions which continues to exist as a cohesive urban fragment in search of revitalization and rebirth.

1  
Warner & Hanna -- "The Incorporated City of Baltimore As It Looked In 1801", (Peabody Institute facsimile, 1947, Baltimore, Maryland).

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Melvin Knight, etc.  
Mrs. Merriam  
Ms. Carol Moore

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Russell St.; thence southerly along said curb of Russell St. to its intersection with the north curb of west Conway St.; thence southerly along the north curb of W. Conway St. to its intersection with the east curb of S. Fremont Ave.; thence northerly along said curb to the point of origin. This boundary encloses the historic properties of Ridgely's Delight while excluding the intrusive neighboring properties.

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**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries of the Ridgely's Delight Historic District are determined by strong visual and physical barriers that make this district a distinct and well-defined entity. These barriers are on the east of Russel Street, a multilaned roadway with mixed commercial and industrial areas beyond; on the south and west by Conway Street and Freemont Avenue which are areas that are being redeveloped for parkland on the south and a highway to the west; and on the north by Pratt Street and Portland Street with the University of Maryland complex beyond. Although the district includes a few pockets of vacant land created by recent demolition, the district's boundaries are drawn to include the highest incidence of historic and cultural fabric while excluding the non-contributing areas such as along Pratt Street east of Emory Street and to utilize such lines of convenience as existing curblines which are emphasized by the above mentioned visual and physical barriers. The eastern and southern boundaries are further defined by a brick wall that was erected in part as a sound barrier along the highway.

The photographs and map submitted as documentation in this application do fairly accurately represent the present appearance of the Ridgely's Delight Historic District. Although limited rehabilitation work has taken place in selected areas, no more demolition has occurred since the photographs were taken and the map drawn.

The Ridgely's Delight Historic District contains approximately 395 structures.